

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 8 and 25-41 have been canceled. The cancellation of claims 25-41 is done in the interests of furthering prosecution. Applicant reserves the right to file continuation/divisional applications to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims. New claims 42-46 have been presented. These claims are commensurate with the Election made August 25, 2006. Thus, claims 1-7, 9-12 and 42-46 are now pending in this application.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) by U.S. Patent No. 5,342,328 to Grossman and claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) by U.S. Patent No. 5,342,328 to Grossman. It is respectfully submitted that the present invention is patentably distinguishable over Grossman '328 and is therefore allowable thereover. For example, Grossman '328 fails to teach or suggest the recited, inter-alia, "said first mating portion is adapted to releasably couple and sealingly engage said second mating portion to establish fluid communication therebetween" as recited by independent claim 1. Grossman '328 is devoid of this feature. Rather, with Grossman '328, the needle hub 17b is monolithically formed with the housing 11 and, thus, is not releasably coupled to the housing 11. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 12 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) by Grossman '328 in view of EP 1,295,561. It is respectfully submitted that EP '561 fails to cure the deficiencies of Grossman '328. For example, the combination of EP '561 with Grossman '328 fails to disclose the recited "said first mating portion is adapted to releasably couple and

sealingly engage said second mating portion to establish fluid communication therebetween" as recited by independent claim 1 from which claim 12 ultimately depends. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

New dependent claims 42-45 ultimately depend from independent claim 1, and, are thus at least patentable for the reasons independent claim 1 is patentable.

New independent claim 46 also recites features to which applicant is entitled and is believed to be patentable over the art of record. For example, none of the references discloses either individually or in combination the recited "the first mating connector is releasably couplable to the second mating connector, and is adapted to sealingly engage the second mating connector to establish fluid communication therebetween...and a base configured for supporting the housing" as required by independent claim 46. Grossman '328 is devoid of any connectors which are structured and function in the recited manner. Allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.

Each of the pending claims is believed to be allowable over the art of record. Allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone or a personal interview may facilitate resolution of any matters, he/she is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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